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Party-Zeal Cenſur'd.

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

UNIVERSITY

OF

OXFORD,

At St. *MARY*'s,

On *Sunday, January* 19. 1752.

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Preſident of C.C.C.

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Imprimatur,

J. BROWNE,

Vice-Can. *Oxon.*

Febr. 7. 1752.

1 COR. iii. 3.

Whereas there is among you Envying, and Strife, and Diviſions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?

ST. *Paul* had very lately preach'd the Goſpel, and planted a Chriſtian Church at *Corinth*, and already there began to appear a Spirit of Diſcord amongſt them. [a] Some *falſe Apoſtles*, and *deceitful Workers*, had crept in, and rais'd Diſſentions and Parties in the Church, ſetting up one Teacher againſt another, and endeavouring to draw them from their Obedience to their firſt Teacher and Apoſtle St. *Paul*. It was one great End and Deſign of this Epiſtle to heal theſe Diviſions, and reſtore Peace there. Thus he beſpeaks them Chap. i. [b] *Now I beſeech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame Thing, and that there be no Diviſions among you: but that ye be perfectly join'd together in the ſame Mind, and in the ſame Judgment. For it hath been declar'd unto me of you, my Brethren, by them which are of the Houſe of Chloe, that there are Contentions among you. Now this I ſay, that every one of you ſaith,*

a 2 Cor. xi. 13. b 1 Cor. i. 10. &c.

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I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Chriſt. --- And here again in my Text -- *Whereas there is among you Envying, and Strife, and Diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as Men?* --- The words are plain, and need little Explication: but the Doctrine contain'd in them uſeful and important. They ſet forth the Miſchief of *Faction*, and *Party-Zeal*, and the Unſuitableneſs thereof to our Chriſtian Profeſſion. This Leſſon, we ſee, St. *Paul* even in his Days found neceſſary moſt earneſtly to inculcate: the ſame Leſſon [a] *his Fellow-Labourer St. Clement*, in the Days immediately following, had Occaſion to preſs on theſe ſame *Corinthians:* and in every Age ſince there has been but too great Neceſſity of the like Exhortations. The peculiar Seaſonableneſs of them in theſe preſent Times I need not enlarge on: I ſhall only add that in this Place they ſeem more particularly neceſſary, as we are not only members of the Publick Community, and liable to join in the *Party-Diſtinctions*, which divide the reſt of our Fellow-Subjects, but are all of us incorporated into one Body here, and moſt of us Members of particular Societies, in all of which Parties and Diſſentions are too often apt to prevail. This may indeed be poſſibly a tender Point to handle, and difficult to ſpeak to without giving Offence: but the ſame Reaſons, which make it difficult, make it alſo neceſſary to inſiſt on it; and the very Soreneſs of the Part,

a See Clemens of Rome his 1ſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians throughout.

though

though it may perhaps call for a more ſkilful Hand, yet ſhews at leaſt that it ought not to be neglected. I ſhall therefore with all Freedom and Earneſtneſs endeavour to lay before you your Duty in this particular: only deſiring that nothing I ſhall ſay may be underſtood, as ſpecially levell'd againſt any particular Party, Perſons, or Meaſures, but in general againſt all *Diviſions*, and *Party-Diſtinctions* whatſoever, whether they be ſuch as diſtract the State, or the Church, or diſturb the Peace of any particular Society.

This being premis'd, I ſhall proceed in the following Method. I ſhall in the *Firſt* Place enquire what is that *Envying, and Strife*, which is here cenſur'd by *the Apoſtle*; *Secondly*, I ſhall ſet forth the miſchievous Effects of it; *Thirdly*, I ſhall conſider the Cenſure here paſs'd by the Apoſtle on it; *Fourthly and Laſtly*, I ſhall lay down ſome Rules to direct our Practice.

As to the *Firſt*, the Word ζῆλος, here tranſlated *Envying*, is often us'd in a good Senſe for a laudable *Zeal:* but then, as it is here join'd with ἔρις καὶ διχοστασίαι, *Strife and Diviſion*, Words generally us'd in a bad Senſe, ſo it was doubtleſs *the Apoſtle's* Intention, to cenſure that *Party-Zeal*, which then rag'd in the Church of *Corinth*. However, on the other Hand, to ſpeak in the general, it muſt be allow'd, that there are Caſes, in which a *Zealous Contention* may be very commendable, and even *Strife and Diviſion* may become lawful and neceſſary. If in the Church *falſe-Teachers* ſhall ariſe, [a] *who bring in damnable*

[a] 2 Pet. ii. 1.

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Hereſies, and *draw away Diſciples after them*; or if *deceitful Workers* create cauſeleſs Diviſions, and endeavour to alienate the Affections of the People from their lawful Teachers and Governors [a], it is not only lawful, but our Duty to *contend earneſtly for the Faith*, zealouſly to withſtand ſuch Deceivers, and by all reaſonable and juſtifiable Means oppoſe their Progreſs. Again, if in the State factious Perſons ſtir up Sedition and Rebellion againſt their rightful Governors, diſpute their juſt Commands, or vilify their Proceedings; or, if in any Society Perſons enter into a Combination againſt the good Government and Diſcipline, the Statutes and Rules of the Community, in ſuch Caſes it becomes the Duty of all good Subjects, and worthy Members of Society, zealouſly to oppoſe ſuch Diſturbers of the Peace. On the other Hand, if in the Church any Biſhop ſhall claim a ſupreme and infallible Authority; if our ſpiritual Governors ſhall coin new Articles of Faith, or impoſe unlawful Terms of Communion, it may be neceſſary to proteſt againſt, and oppoſe, ſuch Innovations. Or, if our temporal Governors ſhall attempt to ſtretch their Authority beyond its lawful Bounds, if their Proceedings are arbitrary and oppreſſive, or their Meaſures weak and deſtructive, it may be reaſonable, as far as our Station admits of, and the Bounds of our Duty will allow, zealouſly to oppoſe ſuch Meaſures and Proceedings, provided it be done with that Temper and Prudence, with

a Jude 3.

that

that Moderation and Meekneſs, which becomes a Diſciple of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Having thus ſeen in what Caſes our *Zeal* may be lawfully employ'd, we ſhall the more eaſily diſcover what kind of *Zeal*, *Strife and Diviſion the Apoſtle* here condemns. All *Diviſions* are indeed in themſelves wrong: and whenever they ariſe, there muſt be a Fault on one Side or other; and it very often happens that both Parties are blameable.

Firſt then, it is moſt apparently a vicious *Party-Zeal*, when the Cauſe we engage in is unjuſtifiable. All Abettors of Hereſy, or Schiſm, all Partiſans of Faction and Rebellion, all Oppoſers of lawful Authority, all Diſturbers of the Peace and good Government of the Society they belong to, all Perſecutors and Oppreſſors, all warm Zealots for Tyranny and Arbitrary Power will be doubtleſs ſeverely accountable for the *Strifes and Diviſions* they occaſion, and the Miſchiefs and Miſeries conſequent thereupon.

Secondly, it is a very unwarrantable *Party-Zeal*, when the Thing we contend for is of little or no Importance. [a] We read in Hiſtory that the Citizens of *Rome* us'd to divide themſelves into Parties in Favour of the ſeveral Charioteers, who ran the Races in the Circus: and theſe Parties diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the Colour of the Coats their favourite Charioteers wore. There

a Vid. Plin. Lib. ix. Epiſt. 6. -- Juvenal. Sat. v. V. 195. -- Sueton. Calig. c. 55. Vitell. c. 14. --- Procop. de Bell. Perſ. Lib. i. C. 24. Hiſt. Arc. C. 7. --- Zonar. Annal. Lib. xiv.

were

were the *Praſini*, and the *Veneti*, the *Green-Party*, and the *Blue*. Theſe Diſtinctions ſubſiſted many Years, and the Conteſts often proceeded ſo high, as to occaſion great Diſturbances, and much Bloodſhed. It too often happens that Societies ſhall divide upon Things of but little more Importance. Men ſhall hate, and perſecute one another with the greateſt Bitterneſs and Animoſity, when the Original of their Quarrel is a mere Trifle, and perhaps the greater Part of them [a], like the People at *Epheſus*, *know not wherefore they came together*. But ſurely Peace is too valuable a Bleſſing to be parted with at ſo cheap a Rate. *Strife and Diviſion* are what a Chriſtian ought by all Means to avoid, and never engage in without the utmoſt Neceſſity: and, if we are compell'd to *contend earneſtly*, yet our *Earneſtneſs and Zeal* ought never to exceed the Importance of the Cauſe.

Thirdly, Let our Cauſe be ever ſo juſt, or ever ſo momentous, yet let us never ſupport it by any unjuſtifiable Means. [b] We muſt not *do Evil that Good may come:* nor will even *the Glory of God*, the moſt important Cauſe of all, juſtifie any unrighteous Action.

Fourthly, our *Zeal* will ſtand condemn'd by the Rules of Reaſon, and Religion, when 'tis attach'd not to Things, but to Perſons. This is indeed moſt commonly the Caſe in Party-Diviſions; and this is what is moſt properly call'd *Party-Zeal*. Men, either out of Affection, or

a Acts xix. 32. b Rom. iii. 7, 8.

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Intereſt, liſt themſelves under ſome particular Leader, and follow him blindly whitherſoever he leads them. And, being thus liſted in oppoſite Parties, they fix odious Names and Diſtinctions on each other, and hate and abuſe one another, though they know not the Meaning of ſuch Names, nor what diſtinguiſhes them from each other, only becauſe they do not join in the ſame Herd, and follow the ſame Leader. Parties ſhall continue to ſubſiſt, and contend with all Earneſtneſs, when the original Cauſe of the Conteſt is perhaps forgot. Nay, it has been frequently ſeen in Societies, that Parties have chang'd Hands, and adopted each others Principles. One Set of Principles ſhall ſuit a Man out of Power, and another, when in Power. The Ringleaders of Sedition have often prov'd the moſt arbitrary Governors: and the ſame Train of Followers has ſtill ſtuck cloſe by them, juſtified the moſt oppoſite Meaſures, and adopted the Principles of the Place, leaving their old ones to be taken up by thoſe in Diſgrace. And thoſe too in their Turn find new Doctrines and new Practices neceſſary. [a] Hiſtory gives us ſad Accounts of the Factions of the *Guelphs* and *Gibelins*; but the Meaning of the Names 'tis not eaſy to determine: all we know with Certainty, is, that theſe Diviſions infeſted *Italy* for many Years, and fill'd it with Bloodſhed and Deſolation. And ſuch ſeems to have been the Caſe at *Corinth*. We are but

a Vid. Sigonius Hiſt. Lib. xi. ---- Blondus Flavius Dec. ii. L. 9.

little acquainted with the Subject of their Contests: only we read [a] that they were *puff'd up for one against another*; [b] and that *every one of them said, I am of* Paul, *and I of* Apollos, *and I of* Cephas, *and I of Christ.*

Having thus seen what Kind of *Zeal and Strife* the Apostle here condemns, let us now in the *Second Place* take a View of the sad Effects of it. [c] *Where Envying and Strife is* (saith St. *James*) *there is Confusion and every evil Work.* When a Spirit of Dissention enters into any Community, it deprives us of all the Pleasures, and all the Advantages of Society. The agreeable Conversation, the Friendly Intercourse, the mutual Assistance and Support, which render Society useful and comfortable, give Place to bitter Animosity, warm Debate, reproachful Language, and injurious Treatment. A Society of Men becomes like a Den of Wild Beasts, gnashing their Teeth at each other, and watching all Opportunities of devouring, and tearing one another to Pieces. Every Man lives in a State of War, and must be perpetually on his Guard. His Mind is ruffled and discompos'd by Contest and Opposition: and his Property, his Credit, and his Person continually expos'd to the fierce Assaults of Party-Rancor and Rage. [d] *If ye bite and devour one another* (saith the Apostle) *take heed that ye be not consum'd one of another.* In the mean Time, while we are eagerly contending for Trifles, the great Ends of our coming into the World are wholly

a 1 Cor. iv. 6. b i. 12. c Jam. iii. 16. d Gal. v. 15.

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neglected. [a] *Into a malicious Soul Wisdom shall not enter.* What Room for Improvement, when Men's Minds are never calm, and their Thoughts wholly employ'd either in defending themselves, or annoying the Enemy. What Progress in Virtue will Men make, when their Tempers are sowr'd, and their Passions inflam'd by continual Disputes? Both Charity and Justice are forc'd to give Way to the Interests of Party: these will outweigh every Consideration, and these will engross all our Attention, while the great Business of Religion is out of our Thoughts, and *the one Thing needful* quite forgot. [b] *Every Kingdom divided against it self is brought to Desolation:* (saith *our Saviour*) *and every City or House, divided against itself, shall not stand.* All Societies, from the greatest to the least, must be ruin'd by *Faction and Division.* How shall the Body be supported, when the Members are at Variance with each other. How shall the Machine be preserv'd, when the Harmony and Union of the Parts is destroyed. A melancholy, but a common, Sight it is to see worthy and good Men, equally designing the Publick Good, yet engag'd in opposite Parties, and hating and opposing each other with the bittereſt Rancour. Though they mean the same Thing, and aim at the same Ends, yet they disappoint those Ends, and deprive the Publick of the Assistance im might receive from them, severally, or jointly, by their mutual Opposition. They draw contrary Ways, and de-

a Wisd. i. 4. b Matt. xii. 25.

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ſtroy each others Force, while the Community, inſtead of receiving Benefit and Support, is diſjointed and torn to Pieces between them. When Civil Diſcord rages, the Publick Good is the laſt Thing thought of. Such Meaſures only will be taken by thoſe in Power, as may be ſubſervient to maintain their Power, and ſtrengthen their Party: and the common Utility will be ſacrific'd to the factious Intereſts of particular Men. On the other Hand the weaker Party will aim only at diſtreſſing thoſe in Power, and will oppoſe and diſappoint all Meaſures, which they may poſſibly enter into for the Publick Good. The Intereſts of *Party* will become the Meaſure of Right and Wrong: theſe will ſway the Balance of Juſtice. and theſe direct her Sword. Diſcipline will be unequally adminiſter'd, and Rewards partially diſtributed: Vice will take Refuge under the Wings of *Party*, and ſeize the Poſts due to Virtue and Merit. In factious Times the worthy Man becomes of little Uſe. When the Waters are troubled, the Mire and Filth will riſe to the Surface. The noiſy, the turbulent, the mercenary, and the profligate, in a Word, the ſtaunch *Party-Man*, will be alone careſs'd, and advanc'd. Such, when *Party* is to be ſerv'd, are the fitteſt Tools of Power: and ſuch the beſt qualified to head an Oppoſition. How then will the Wheels of Government be clogg'd, when the baſeſt Metal is employ'd in their Compoſition? and what Hazards muſt a Society run in Times of Diſtreſs, when Men of mean Abilities, and

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no Principles ſtand in the Place of its Supporters and Defenders? The Community is robb'd of the Aſſiſtance of one half, and that the better half of its Members; and is in the Condition of a Paralytick Body, one Side of which is depriv'd of Life and Motion, and ſerves only to encumber and weight down the other. A State, or Society, in this Condition becomes *a Scorn and Deriſion to them that are round about*, an eaſy Prey to every Enemy. Amidſt the Diviſions and Diſtractions, which reign within, the Adverſary reaps all poſſible Advantages. The Body is enfeebled and diſpirited, incapable of making any vigorous Efforts. Each Party employs its chief Rage and Force againſt its oppoſite; and is unable to make Head, often ready to aſſiſt, or call in, the common Enemy. [a] A lively, but dreadful, Inſtance of this we have in the Account given us by the Hiſtorian of the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. That miſerable City was more terribly harraſs'd, and ſuffer'd much more from the Factions, which rag'd within her Walls, than from the Roman Army without. Theſe Factions ſpent their whole Strength in combating each other: and did not unite againſt the common Enemy, till they had firſt waſted all Means of Defence, or Subſiſtence. I have neither Time to tell of, nor Words to deſcribe, the Injuries and Oppreſſions, the Tumults and Seditions, the Wars and Rebellions, the Bloodſhed and Devaſtation, the Cruelties and Maſſacres, which have taken their Source from

a Joſephus de Bell. Jud.

Party-

Party-Rage. But I hope this ſhort and imperfect View of the miſchievous Effects of this evil Spirit, will prevail on us to uſe our beſt Endeavors to caſt it out.

I ſhall therefore proceed in the *Third Place* to conſider the Cenſure here paſs'd on it by the *Apoſtle --- Whereas there is among you Envying and Strife, and Diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as Men?* This latter Clauſe ſets forth both the Difficulty, and the Neceſſity, of avoiding all *Party-Zeal, Strife, and Diviſion. As Men, as carnal Men*, this is a *Sin which moſt eaſily beſets us:* but then, as Creatures acted by a higher Principle, endued with Reaſon, profeſſing the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, and under the Guidance of his Spirit, it is our indiſpenſable Duty [a] *to follow Peace with all Men.* Both theſe Particulars may be worthy our Conſideration. When Party-Diſſenſions run high, it requires a ſteady Hand to ſteer between the two Extremes. A Man muſt be endued with no ſmall Share of Virtue, Prudence, and Reſolution to act uniformly according to the Rules of Reaſon and Religion. Every Temper and Diſpoſition will meet with ſuitable Temptations. Some are naturally diſpos'd to take Fire; ſome love to be meddling in every Conteſt; and thoſe of a more meek and quiet Diſpoſition will for their own Eaſe and Security ſuffer themſelves to be carried down with the Stream. The ambitious will find the Way of Party the eaſieſt and ſhorteſt Road to Preferment;

a Heb. xii. 14.

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the mercenary will find it the moſt profitable Fiſhing in troubled Waters; the Libertine will here meet with the beſt Cover for his Vices; and the obnoxious Man will here ſeek a ſafe Refuge, and a ſure Skreen. Nay, what is ſtill more deplorable, the beſt of Men will be by their very Goodneſs and Virtue ſometimes betray'd into an unwarrantable *Party-Zeal*. Friendſhip and Gratitude will lead us into perſonal Attachments; the Love of our Country, a Concern for the Publick Good, a Zeal for the Cauſe of Virtue and Religion, a juſt Deteſtation of Vice, and an honeſt Diſdain of unworthy Men, and wicked Meaſures, may ſometimes tranſport us into a vicious Extreme. In our younger Years eſpecially we are moſt ſuſceptible of this Kind of *Zeal*. The Inexperience, the Impetuoſity, and even the Honeſty of Youth engage them to liſt too haſtily in a *Party*. And, when once liſted, they find it difficult to retreat. Men combin'd in a Faction ferment, and inflame each other. The Example, Authority, and Perſwaſions of thoſe about us, recommend all Doctrines, and juſtifie all Meaſures. The Fear of Reproach, and the Shame of deſerting our Companions, keep us firm, and drive us on to Lengths, which perhaps we ourſelves diſapprove of.

But, though the Words of my Text may imply, that, *as Men*, we are too apt to be warm, yet at the ſame Time they condemn all intemperate Warmth, and *Zeal*, as unbecoming the Character of a *Chriſtian*. It was undoubtedly the

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poſtle's Deſign to cenſure all ſuch *carnal* Practices, and to exhort his Diſciples to be more *ſpiritually minded*;[a] to *beſeech them* (as he himſelf in the firſt Chapter expreſſes it) *by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that they all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no Diviſions among them, but that they be perfectly join'd together in the ſame Mind, and in the ſame Judgment.* Let me join in the like Exhortation, and conjure, and beſeech you all, as *Men*, as *Gentlemen*, as *Scholars*, and as *Chriſtians*, *to be of one Accord, of one Mind.*

As Men indeed, i. e. *as carnal Men*, conſiſting of Fleſh and Blood, *Strife* is (as we have ſeen) but too natural to us: but then, in another, and better Senſe, *as Men*, as Rational Creatures, all ſuch intemperate Heat is moſt highly unbecoming us. Fierceneſs and Rage is the Property of Wild Beaſts: and tis natural to them to bite, and tear, and devour one another. But to Man Reaſon was given, to govern his Paſſions, to moderate his Zeal, to guide his Steps aright, and teach him to ſee into the Conſequences of Actions, and to conſult his own and the publick Happineſs. Man is by nature a Social Creature. As we all ſtand in need of mutual Aſſiſtance and Support, ſo we are endued with a Principle, which prompts and inclines us to enter into Commerce and Converſation with our Brethren, to join in their Intereſts and Concerns, and to wiſh and ſeek their Welfare. *If we have therefore bitter Envying and Strife in our Hearts,*

[a] 1 Cor. i. 10.

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we ſtrike ourſelves out of the Liſt of Rational Animals, and rank ourſelves with the worſt Part of the Brute Creation. We both act beneath the Dignity of our Nature, and deprive ourſelves of the Bleſſings and Privileges annex'd to it.

Let me farther enforce the ſame Leſſon on you, as *Gentlemen*. This bitter Weed may perhaps too naturally ſpring up in Minds untaught, and uncultivated. It is no ſtrange Thing to ſee the Common People run haſtily into Brawls and Riots. But you are, by your Birth, and Education, taught to move in a higher Sphere, to be above the low Diſputes, and little Quarrels, which occupy the Minds, and diſturb the Peace of the vulgar and ignorant. [a] *It is an Honour for a Man to ceaſe from Strife* (ſaith *Solomon.) Bitterneſs, and Wrath, and Clamour and Evil-ſpeaking* are Things unworthy the Character, and the Name of a *Gentleman*, and much more that of a *Scholar*.

[b] *Who is a wiſe Man, and endued with Knowledge amongſt you? let him ſhew out of a good Converſation his Works with Meekneſs of Wiſdom.* True *Wiſdom is peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated, full of Mercy, and good Fruits, without Partiality*. The great Uſe of Learning and Philoſophy is to calm the Mind, to curb the Paſſions, and teach us the Government of ourſelves. The Man engag'd in the Purſuit of uſeful Knowledge ſhould, one would think, have little Time, or Temptation, to concern himſelf in the little

a Prov. xx. 3. b Jam. iii. 13, 17.

Affairs which uſually engage the Attention, and inflame the Paſſions of carnal and worldly Men. We live here ſequeſter'd from the Noiſe and Hurry of this buſy World, and have little to do with the Diſputes of Parties, or Schemes of Politicians. We are all of us call'd upon both by our Publick, and Private, Statutes *to dwell together in Unity:* and the Wiſdom of our Founders has taken all poſſible Care, both to prevent, and heal, any Diviſions, or Diſputes, which may diſturb the Peace of theſe Societies. This our [a] *Jeruſalem is built as a City, that is at Unity in itſelf. O pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem: may they proſper that love thee. Peace be within thy Walls, and Plenteouſneſs within thy Palaces.*

Laſtly, and above all, let me *beſeech you*, as *Chriſtians, that there be no Strife, or Diviſions among you.* This is what the *Apoſtle* ſeems principally to intend in the Words of my Text --- *are ye not carnal, and walk as Men?* --- thereby ſignifying that [b] *Chriſtians* ought not to *walk, as other Men walk'd, in the Vanity of their Mind,* [c] *living in Malice and Envy, hateful and hating one another.* Of *Chriſtians* a more ſpiritual and heavenly Behaviour is expected and [d] *worthy of the Vocation, wherewith they are call'd.* [e] We are *Citizens of Heaven:* [f] and *our Affections ſhould be ſet on Things above. The Things on the Earth,* which the Men of this World diſpute and contend about, are not worthy the Notice, or Con-

a Pſal. cxxii. 3 &c. b Eph. iv. 17. c Tit. iii. 3. d Eph. iv. 1. e Phil. iii. 20. f Col. 3. 2.

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cern, of him, [a] who *ſeeks a better Country*, and looks on himſelf, as *a Stranger and Pilgrim* here. There is no Duty more frequently taught, or more powerfully enforc'd in the Goſpel, than mutual Love and Unity. [b] *Chriſt* is ſtil'd *the Prince of Peace* [c] and his Goſpel *the Goſpel of Peace*. In the Old Teſtament the Kingdom of *Chriſt* is propheſied of, as a State of univerſal Peace and Amity, [d] where *the Wolf ſhould dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhould lie down with the Kid*; [e] where they ſhould *beat their Swords into Plow-Shares, and their Spears into Pruning-Hooks; Nation ſhould not lift up Sword againſt Nation, neither ſhould they learn War any more*. Throughout the New Teſtament we are every where call'd upon to be [f] *of one Accord, of one Mind*; [g] *to ſeek Peace, and enſue it*; [h] *if it be poſſible, as much as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all Men. Our Lord* himſelf was the moſt perfect Pattern of Goodneſs and Meekneſs. [i] *He did not ſtrive, nor cry, neither did any Man hear his Voice in the Streets*. And this hath he eſtabliſh'd as the Badge and Character of his Diſciples --- [k] *Learn of me* (ſaith he) *for I am meek, and lowly in Heart*. --- [l] *A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have lov'd you, that ye alſo love one another. By this ſhall all Men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye have Love one to another*. [m] *Chriſtians* are in Scripture peculiarly diſtinguiſh'd by

a Heb. xi. 13 &c. b Iſ. ix. 6. c Eph. vi. 15. d Iſ. xi. 6. e Iſ. ii. 4. f Phil. ii. 2. g 1 Pet. iii. 11. h Rom. xii. 18. i Matt. xii. 19. k Matt. xi. 29. l Joh. xiii. 34, 35. m Acts ix. 30 & alibi.

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the Title of *the Brethren:* we are repreſented as [a] *one Body in Chriſt, and every one Members one of another.* We are cemented and knit together by all the ſtrongeſt, all the moſt engaging, endearing Ties imaginable: and therefore the moſt perfect Harmony, and intimate Union ought to reign among us. [b] *We ſhould* (as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks) *endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. For there is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are call'd in one Hope of your Calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Since therefore ſo great are our Obligations to live in Peace and Unity, and at the ſame Time ſo powerful the Temptations to *Strife and Diviſion*, it may be neceſſary in the *Fourth* and Laſt Place to lay down ſome Rules to direct our Practice in this Particular. Theſe ſhall be chiefly ſuch as have been ſuggeſted from what has been already ſaid. *Firſt* then let us lay it down as an inviolable Maxim, never on any Pretence to do any thing which our Conſcience condemns. In all our Actions let the Law of God be our Rule, and our Conſcience our Guide. Let us walk on ſteadily in the Way of the Lord, and *turn not aſide, to the Right Hand, or to the left.* Let no Temptation of Intereſt, or Affection, no Provocation, or Reſentment, no Motives of Honour, no Fear of Diſgrace, or Reproach, not even the endearing Ties of Friendſhip, or the ſacred Laws

a Rom. xii. 5. b Eph. iv. 3 &c.

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of Gratitude, ever prevail on us to ſwerve from our known Duty. Let not our Zeal for the beſt of Cauſes, for Truth, Virtue, or Religion, ever tempt us to *do Evil that Good may come.*

Secondly, as our Conſcience ought to be our Guide, ſo let us take all poſſible Care, that our Conſcience be well inform'd. Let us always act on ſettled Principles, and, before we contend, know perfectly what it is we contend for. In all Affairs of Importance, which may become the Subject of Debate, or Occaſion of Diviſion, whether they relate to the Principles of Religion, the Laws of Morality, or the particular Conſtitution of the Community, or Society we belong to, let us endeavour, as far as our Station and Abilities will permit, to learn the true State of the Queſtion, and then we ſhall the better diſcern how to direct our Actions, and proportion our *Zeal.*

Thirdly, Let us avoid, as far as is poſſible, all violent perſonal Prejudices: let us not be too vehement, either in our Averſion to, or Admiration of any of the Sons of Men. We are often moſt miſerably deceiv'd in our Opinions of Mankind. The beſt of Men have their Failings: and few are ſo bad, as not to have ſome good Qualities. Let us therefore oppoſe no Man at all Adventures, nor follow any Man implicitly. Let us judge for ourſelves, and weigh the Nature and Conſequences of our Actions, before we engage in them. Let no Attachment to thoſe we eſteem, nor Reſentment againſt thoſe we diſlike, ever drive

drive us into violent, or unjuſtifiable Meaſures.

Fourthly, Let us learn to govern our Paſſions. [a] *Be not haſty in thy Spirit to be angry:* (ſaith *Solomon*) *for Anger reſteth in the Boſom of Fools.* Let us not be apt to take Fire at every Trifle: nor ſuffer our *Zeal* to exceed its proper Bounds, even where there may appear to be juſt Cauſe for it. We are all of us *compaſs'd with Infirmities*, and liable *to be tempted:* we ſhould therefore bear with the eagerneſs of the paſſionate, and the Prejudices of the ignorant and prepoſſeſs'd; and not oppoſe even Vice itſelf with *railing Accuſations.* In every Society *Offences* will happen. All Men will not think and act aright: much leſs will they think and act, juſt as we do. We ſhould therefore be prepar'd to meet with and bear Provocations, and ſhould learn to moderate our Reſentment, and never, without the utmoſt Neceſſity, carry it ſo far, as to endanger the Publick Peace. [b] We muſt *put on (as the Elect of God, holy, and beloved) Bowels of Mercies, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind, Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel againſt any: even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo alſo do ye.*

Finally, and above all theſe things *put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs.* [c] *Let all Bitterneſs, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-ſpeaking be put away from you, with all Malice.* Let us judge of Perſons, and Actions, with Candour, and Good-nature. Let us learn

a Eccleſ. vii. 9. b Col. iii. 12 &c. c Eph. iv. 31.

Malice.

to distinguish between the Man and his Principles: oppose these with a suitable Zeal, but treat him himself with Kindness and Gentleness, [a] *in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth, that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil.* Let us put on that [b] *Charity*, which *suffereth long, and is kind*; that *Charity* which *envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puff'd up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provok'd, thinketh no Evil, rejoyceth not in Iniquity, but rejoyceth in the Truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* This is, as we have seen, the Badge and Character of *Christians:* and without this we must not call ourselves *the Disciples of Christ*, nor hope for any Benefit from any thing, which he hath done, or suffer'd for us. [c] *He that loveth not his Brother, abideth in Death.* He will be for ever excluded the peaceful Regions of the Blessed, and must expect to dwell in *everlasting Burnings*, [d] where there is *wailing and gnashing of Teeth.* There are those evil and malicious Spirits, who could not be at Peace in Heaven itself: there are the *mighty ones of the Earth*, the Authors and Ringleaders of Wars, Rebellions, and Seditions, [e] *who caus'd their Terror in the Land of the Living.* [f] *But the Souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of God: and there shall no Torment touch*

a 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. b 1 Cor. xiii. 4 &c. c 1 Joh. iii. 14.
d Matth. xiii 42. e Ezek. xxxii. 26, 27. f Wisd. iii. 1, 3.

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them: They are in Peace, plac'd far above the Storms and Tempeſts, which diſturb theſe lower Regions: [a] *There the Wicked ceaſe from troubling: and there the Weary be at Reſt.* There they enjoy the Society of God, and his bleſſed Angels, and Souls of the ſame mild and peaceful Diſpoſitions. There perpetual Love and Harmony ſhall dwell: *Mercy and Truth ſhall meet together; Righteouſneſs and Peace ſhall kiſs each other.*

Now to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore.

a Job iii. 17.

F I N I S.

P. 11. L. 29. *for* im *read* it.

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